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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR NOVEMBER 07, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for November 07, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Hakkari Governor Ayhan Nasuhbeyoglu and some commanders went to the Yuksekova district in Hakkari and heard problems of the tradesmen there on a local level, and talked with people in the streets. The tradesmen requested from the military officers to let soldiers shop in the downtown district.

EKSPRES / BOLGE: DSP (Democratic Left Party) in Adana opened a stand with a condolence book for people to express their feelings upon former premier Bulent Ecevit's passing away.

BOLGE: Adana Mayor Aytac Durak extended condolences to Turkish people upon the passing of Bulent Ecevit. Durak said that not every person holding authority has been able to remain honest like Bulent Ecevit in the course of his/her duties.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The daily points out that Bulent Ecevit had always taken a stance against the democratic rights of the Kurds, and he was never able to comprehend the reasons behind why the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan was surrendered to Turkey on February 16, 1999, during his premiership.

OZGUR GUNDEM: DTP Chairperson Ahmet Turk harshly criticized PM Erdogan who said that the situation was being exaggerated, after the flooding incidents in the southeastern region. Turk asked, "Are 40 people killed in the disaster not enough for PM Erdogan?"

OZGUR GUNDEM: The daily continues to voice its allegations which were reported on October 19 about a mass grave found in Mardin's Nusaybin district. The daily points out that the remains in the grave could belong to Armenians and Syrians who were allegedly killed in 1915.

BOLGE / ZAMAN: French Ambassador to Ankara, Paul Poudade, paid a visit to the Mersin Governor and told the Governor that the current government [in Paris] was not backing the bill that made it a crime to deny the Armenian genocide and that the issue must be left to historians.

SECURITY

OZGUR GUNDEM / EVRENSEL: Turkish Armed Forces launched a large scale operation against the PKK in Siirt's Kurtalan and Eruh districts. Meanwhile, Mahmut Alinak, DTP provincial chairperson in Kars, said that they would undertake actions to stop the operations unless the military operations going on in the southeastern region despite the cease-fire were stopped. Alinak said that their patience was running out.

ECONOMY

SABAH (GUNEY) / BOLGE / ZAMAN: A business delegation from Adana's Chamber of Industry went to Iran following the delegation's visits to Greece, Syria, and Iraq. Adana Governor Cahit Kirac is also a member of the delegation.

BOLGE: Last week's rains lowered the quality of cotton cultivated in the fields of the Cukurova region by 35 per cent. Provincial Director of Agriculture said that the cotton yield, which was anticipated as 200,000 tons, will be badly affected from the recent situation.

CRIME / LAW ENFORCEMENT

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / SABAH (GUNEY): Diyarbakir and Erzincan police seized 52.5 kilograms of heroin in an anti-drug operation conducted in the Diyarbakir city center. Separately, in an operation conducted against illegal arms in Gaziantep, police seized 9 pistols smuggled to Turkey from the northern Iraq, and detained four people. Police also found anti-aircraft and G-3 bullets at the houses and businesses of the smugglers.

CULTURE / SOCIETY

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Heavy rains affecting the

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southeastern region caused flooding incidents, one of which recently hit Hakkari's Semdinli district. Three people disappeared and four people were wounded there. 150 houses have been evacuated. The daily points out that, like in the recent flooding in Batman, the Governor's Office of Hakkari reportedly rejected the Semdinli Municipality's request for a helicopter to access the quarters which the flooding hit because of the bad weather conditions. Semdinli Mayor Hursit Tekin made a call for urgent aid to be sent to the province and said that water network, electricity and telephone lines were down in the district. 65 civil society organizations, and municipalities in the region, which the daily reports the latter as from DTP, have been sending aid to the area and making calls for the government to declare the region as a disaster zone. The organizations, which expressed that PM Erdogan was informed insufficiently about the disaster in the region, made a call to the prime minister [asking him] to visit the region.

RADIKAL: The daily reports that three people were wounded and three people disappeared in yesterday's flooding in Hakkari's Semdinli district.

OZGUR GUNDEM / EVRENSEL: The flooding which hit Batman a week ago damaged 10,000 houses and affected 62,841 people, according to the damage assessment studies of the Batman Governor's Office. Kizilay (The Red Crescent) delivered 600 blankets, 400 beds, and 218 heaters to the people. DTP's Batman provincial party organization launched a cleaning campaign in the quarters badly hit by the flooding. The flooding affected Adiyaman province as well, and 50 houses and businesses were washed and covered by the flood waters. The municipality workers and people struggled to discharge the flood waters from the houses.

BOLGE / EKSPRES: Furniture manufacturers marched towards the Seyhan Municipality in Adana when the municipal authorities attempted to close down nearly 200 businesses lacking official documents required to conduct business.

BOLGE: Group of students in Mersin University of Mersin, Cukurova University of Adana, and Mustafa Kemal University in Hatay protested YOK (Higher Education Council) on the day that marked the 25th anniversary of YOK's foundation.
GREEN